

OCT 10 2006

520.43429X00

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Minoru YOSHIDA et al.  
Serial No.: 10/765,920  
Filed: January 29, 2004  
Title: PATTERN DEFECT INSPECTION METHOD AND ITS APPARATUS  
Group: 2878  
Examiner: ZETTL, Mary E.  
Confirmation No.: 2671

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT FILED WITH REQUEST FOR CONTINUED  
EXAMINATION (RCE)**

Mail Stop: AMENDMENT  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

October 10, 2006

Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated April 10, 2006, please amend the  
above-identified application as listed below and as set forth on the following pages:

Amendments to the claims begin on page 2;

Remarks are included beginning on page 13; and

Authorization is included on page 19.